

MINUTES

Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT) Wednesday, August 26, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m.

BOT Members: Travis Creamer, Chris Chandler, Nichole Dowlearn, Tara Dunsmore, Deb Knox Teitel, Jen Kuhn, Ellie Landru, Jen Mayo, Tori McCarthy (MVM GC Chair), Carrie Jean Rathmell (CCM GC Chair), Shemica Sheppard, Rita Shewbridge, Molly Spence

1. Call To Order

Molly called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Welcome

Molly welcomed the community

3. Community Comments

None

4. Consent Agenda Items

- *July BOT Minutes approved on 8/17/20: 7 aye, 0 abstain, 0 nay, 6 did not vote.*
- *Acceptance of the FY20/21 MVMPCS and CCMPCS budgets on 8/24/20: 9 aye, 0 abstain, 0 nay, 4 did not vote.*

5. Reports

5 Mins – MMCI President Report

Molly Spence

The topics Molly has been working on primarily are included at points later in the agenda.

5 Mins – CCM VP Report

Christopher Chandler

No update.

5 Mins – MVM VP Report

Ellie Landru

The MVM building at 217 Dill Ave. had a chiller at the building's pump went bad and portions of the building did not have air conditioning. Mr. Dennis met with Ellie and coordinated with Mr. Morelli and Precision Heating & Cooling. There was a delay in receiving parts but it should be resolved at some point tomorrow. Tara was alerted to the problem on Frederick Scanner and the responders were unable to enter the building and the alarm had gone off

twice. The previous emergency plans included location of keys and the emergency responders said these keys did not work. Ms. Dorman has updated the process to make sure that she is contacted in the future. Mr. Dennis and Ms. Dorman are working to make sure that everything is up to date for emergency protocols for MVM in the future.

Molly encouraged both schools to make sure their emergency protocols are in place and up to date.

5 Mins – BOT Treasurer Report

Jeff Koehler

Report emailed in advance. [Included at the end of the minutes.]

6. Updates

CCM update

Carrie Jean Rathmell / Marilyn Horan

Carrie Jean sent a report in advance. [Included at the end of the minutes.] The two items to be on the BOT radar that are at the GC level currently are custodial staffing; CCM is confirming options with distance learning. At this time they believe .5 staffing is appropriate with distance learning. CCM is working to confirm this with FCPS HR, then it will go to the GC, and then it will be posted through HR. The second item is the GC is beginning research into the possibility of a charter amendment in the area of Pre-K 4. There may be reasons to consider a charter amendment. Marilyn shared that staff has been working like crazy to gather materials and distribute Chromebooks. CCM has access to 46 chromebooks. 8 will go to staff. They are identifying students that may be qualified to go into the school, there are currently 16. This will not start before September 14.

MVM update

Tori McCarthy/Amy Dorman

Tori and Amy both emailed updates [Included at the end of the minutes]. Several open positions have been filled. The SEIA is on hold due to the county. The Spanish instructor gave notice suddenly so there will be an opportunity for our students to take a Spanish class through FCPS. Orientations have been going well. Amanda has taken over Guidepost and added a lot of content. MVM is still fine tuning small group instruction.

Fundraising Committee

Tara Dunsmore

No update

Grants Committee

Jeff Koehler

No update

Lottery Committee

Melissa Najera/David Henry

Update sent in advance. [Included at the end of the minutes.]

Facility update

Molly Spence

MMCI is in the same spot as last month. Any and every property that may be a possibility is being looked at thoroughly. Nothing has risen to the level to present to the board. The facilities committee is hopeful and will present to the board as soon as something becomes available.

Sarah Brooks added information on T-Mobile Business. Affordable hot spots have been offered for the charters with unlimited data. They heard FCPS would not be providing this service to Charter schools so they put together a package. MMCI would receive the hotspots for free (\$200 fee waived) with unlimited data and would cost \$20/month. Rural/mountainous connectivity can be verified with an address but T-Mobile recently bought Sprint and their network has recently increased. There is a 3 day business turnaround for shipment and can go directly to students. Molly said that we will need to hear from the school level if this is something they need support from MMCI. The GCs can each do an analysis.

7. Proposal Presentation

Clubhouse Kids

Aimee and Chris Dunn

Aimee and Chris reached out because established childcares were asked if they were able to open so that licensed services can be offered with virtual learning. Clubhouse Kids asked if they could utilize the space they normally occupy at both MVM and CCM. They would be open Monday through Friday (with a three day option) from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and an 8 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. option. There would be no more than 13 people per room which would become a cohort and include a designated staff. This would include the learning component and day care. Staff has been following strict guidelines and would be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting anything that comes in the buildings. From Chromebooks to lunchboxes and all school supplies and staff purses. They will act as though anything coming in the building could have COVID on it. They will also clean restrooms. Everything will be cleaned top to bottom every hour or more as needed. In order to do this they would need a reduced rent rate. Once they reach 6 children they would start paying rent, and there would be a tiered payment based on the number of children that would sign up for the program. Cleaning products will be based on EPA recommendations. There would be 2 staff for 13 children. Children and adults must wear masks inside and outside. The program will be for children 5-13 years old based on licensing. Only children will be admitted during covid restrictions. A staff member will do a curbside check in with health screening. Parents can not come into the building. Parents will take the temperature of their child in front of staff. A series of questions will be asked. It will be logged and kept on file. Any suspected outbreak will be reported. The 5 day week plan will be offered for \$219/week, and the 3 day week plan for \$159/week. Aimee encouraged families to write to delegates for extra funding to be placed in the childcare fund. The summer amount on vouchers is always about 20% higher than regular childcare vouchers and there is a push to increase this during the year. Logistical concerns were discussed and potential workarounds seem to be available for these issues.

8. Discussion/Action Item

- **Discussion/Vote:** Clubhouse Kids (Tara)
Tara brought up the discussion about whether the BOE has approved school buildings for use by daycares. At the August 5 meeting the BOE approved before and

after care and specifically amended it to include all day care. Unless this has changed this is the most current decision. Molly discussed that our building is not an FCPS building and this is not a concern unless it is a union issue, and this is not a union issue. Molly made a motion to approve the plan set forth by Clubhouse Kids to provide a program at both CCM and MVM as presented. The board discussed the option to not charge rent but felt that rent was necessary to formalize the relationship. Molly motioned to approve the proposal from Clubhouse Kids sent on August 20th with the amendment to the rent clause to charge \$1/day rent regardless of how many students are enrolled. Ellie seconded the motion. 8 voted in favor. Abstain: 1, none against. Tara will communicate with Clubhouse Kids.

- **Discussion:** COVID-19 BOT response (Molly) Jen read list identified at last BOT meeting. The GCs were to address the list and let the BOT know any additional needs from the BOT. MVM and CCM GCs shared the items with their GCs and nothing stood out as items with which they were unable to move forward.

- **Discussion/Vote:** FY21 Budget (Tara/Jeff)
 - The first document discussed was MMCI FY21 Budget. This reflects the deficit that will be pulled from savings. Fortunately MMCI does have savings to cover this. Molly brought up fundraising strategies. Tara mentioned it might be better to look at the annual fund versus small fundraisers. The smaller fundraisers take a lot of volunteer time and capital and are not the biggest impact. MMCI has given both schools the ability to make their own fundraising decisions. If MMCI would want to get involved in fundraising that gets tricky.
 - Info for reserve in savings - Amy O'Connor has looked up what the standard savings should be and recommends that MMCI start saving with a purpose instead of just saving in case. MMCI should determine goals on how money should intentionally be utilized. This will be brought to the BOT in the next couple of months.
 - Income Distribution Chart - Tara presented a visualization of how income comes in and is distributed. Tara noted that the bookkeeper position was not included because when we decided to increase this position it was decided to cover it at the MMCI level the first year.

- Tara made a motion to approve the MMCI Income Distribution Document as prepared by Amy O'Connor. Molly seconded. Aye 10, nay 0.

- Tara made a motion to approve the MMCI Budget for FY21 as prepared and presented by MMCI bookkeeper Amy O'Connor. Molly seconded. Carried Jean asked about a depreciation expense under CCM. Tara explained that this is from the CCM buildout. This is the final year of that depreciation expense and it will not be in the budget next year. Aye 10, nay 0.

- **Discussion/Vote:** Financial Policies Review (Tara/Jeff)
Wait until next month.

- **Discussion:** Electronic Voting Expense approval - Association Voting (Jen Kuhn) Jen Kuhn made a motion to use Association Voting again this year for a cost of \$299. Ellie seconded the motion. Carrie Jean inquired about the annual amount for unlimited voting and Jen confirmed it would not benefit MMCI because it would need to be used for more than two elections. Aye 10, Nay 0.

Molly discussed the upcoming election and beginning discussions with the community about the role of the BOT and open positions.

Molly adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m.

Advance Reports

The following reports were sent to the BOT prior to the meeting:

- Treasurer Report
- MVM Update
- CCM Update
- Lottery Update

Treasurer Report (Jeff Koehler)

- Jeff will send out the July budget report as soon as it is completed.
- The audit was completed last week, and it seemed to go well. Amy O'Conner did a great job fielding all of the questions from the auditors! I'll send the final audit report out once it is finalized.
- We need to look at the insurance for this year and the next year. All of the invoices are still coming in, and these are being paid by MMCI as they come in. For the future, I would like each GC to have an "insurance person" to review the coverages and see if additional coverage is needed for each school (ex. extra property/contents coverage).
- Tara, Amy, and I have been talking about adjusting the MMCI admin fee for next year to streamline costs (ex. insurance), so we will have some discussions about this in upcoming meetings.

MVM Update (Amy Dorman)

I. Staffing

- A. Special education vacancy was filled by Connor Newlon. He will be working with the older students at MVM and has completed his pre-service days. He is being supported by Amanda Bodden as well as the special education department.
- B. Custodian vacancy was filled by Seth Dwaah, who began on August 17th. He is receiving guidance from Dennis and has settled in nicely. Work on the grounds and classroom prep has resumed in earnest.
- C. Administrative secretary vacancy was filled by Renee (Nakisha) Holt.

She began August 25 and has experience most recently at Spring Ridge and prior to that at Frederick Classical. She has hit the ground running!

D. We selected a candidate for SEIA but HR has declined to extend the offer due to an FCPS imposed hiring freeze for these positions.

E. We are currently interviewing for primary IA, possibly upper el IA as well. We have a couple of promising candidates.

F. Our Spanish instructor gave notice unexpectedly to take a full time position in a local private school; MVM students may opt into online Spanish classes which will incur a per student seat charge. This information is in the process and will be communicated to me.

II. Staff returned to duty this Monday (8/24) and have been busy with creating and fine tuning schedules, hosting parent orientation, and planning learning activities for students.

A. Feedback from community members on the teacher Orientations was very positive; they found the sessions informative and appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.

B. The Meerkat Guidepost is updated for the start of the new school year. It contains new features (such as a hotlinked calendar) and is more streamlined across levels. Feedback has been positive about this as a platform to access learning and important information. It publishes every Monday morning.

III. ESSER/GEER Grants monies were approved and added to MVM's budget. However, this happened on the day Nicki left. Dan Lippy tapped a contact at the Central Office to help place the orders for teacher laptops and student Chromebooks. When Renee receives clearance for MVM accounts, she will begin placing the rest of the orders.

IV. Enrollment has seen some additional movement in the past month and the lottery committee is working to fill vacancies as they occur.

MVM Update (Tori McCarthy)

Updates and reminders on movement of GC and Committees:

- The GC continues to collaborate virtually to update the Student Handbook for MVM. We continue to struggle with making sure the handbook appropriately reflects FCPS and BOT guidance due to changing parameters and disconnected communications.
- We had two exceptional candidates apply for the open MVMPCS GC Parent Representative position. During the August GC meeting (8/3) the GC voted Kevin Lynn to complete the vacant term (through 12/31/21). Kevin and his family have been members of the MVMPCS community for going on 12 years and he has previously served as part of the lottery facilitation team. The GC is excited to

have his enthusiasm as part of the team and hope his experience with MVMPCS and “outside of the box” ideas communicated during the interview process will help continue to move MVMPCS in a positive direction.

- The MVMPCS Committee chairs have been meeting monthly to coordinate back-to-school needs and strategize ways the GC can better communicate with the committees. A wonderful idea emerged for virtual back-to-school flowers and the community is being activated to complete this task.
- MVMPCS is still actively seeking multiple committee chairs and co-chairs for several additional committees.
- The GC annual budget work session occurred on Monday July 27, 2020 to discuss the SY 2020-2021 budget. This was the first meeting led by the new MVMPCS Budget Committee chair, Rachel Schooley, and she did an excellent job. The GC approved the budget as presented by Rachel during the August GC meeting 8/3. Thank you to Marisa Berube for supporting Rachel during this transition and for her excellent work supporting the GC and the MCMPVS budget over the past 7 years.

Votes Completed:

- August 3, 2020, the GC approved the SY 2020-2021 budget as presented during the same meeting.
- August 3, 2020, Kevin Lynn was approved to fill the vacated Parent Representative position term to end 12/31/21.
- August 3, 2020, the September meeting was moved from September 7, 2020 to September 14, 2020 in observance of Labor Day

Upcoming Worksessions and Meetings:

- September 14, 2020 @ 6:30 pm, Monthly GC Voting Meeting to be held virtually.

CCM Update (Carrie Jean Rathmell)

COVID Grant Funds

1. Here is a [folder with CCM COVID Grant documents](#).

2020-2021 Budget

1. Final numbers for [CCM PPA received from FCPS available in this folder](#).
2. Looks like under a 2% increase in the adjusted PPA.
 - a. \$10,539.62 per student
 - b. \$2,845,697 CCM total for 270 students
3. 17 Aug deadline for the detailed budget submission to FCPS.
4. [Budget originally approved \(not current version\) by CCM GC at regular meeting on Aug 12.](#)
5. [Updated version of CCM 2020-2021 Budget approved by CCM GC Evote 8/18](#) (more context available [here](#)).
6. MMCI evote approval initiated again 8/22

Rent at Corporate Ct

1. Landlord inquired about the rent payment due on July 1 per the CCM lease.
2. Amy O'Connors responded that we are unable to make this payment yet because FCPS has not yet released the funds. Amy says this has been the case every year. We are never able to make our rent payment by July 1 because we never have our funds from FCPS at that time.
3. Jeff Koehler confirmed during the Aug 12 GC meeting that the payment has been made.

BOE Decision regarding Draft Reopening Plan

1. Meeting minutes and video available in Board docs through FCPS website
 - a. Wednesday, July 8
 - b. Wednesday, July 29 3:00pm
 - c. Wednesday, August 5 time 3pm
2. All virtual for fall semester through January with option for small groups
3. Teachers and instructional staff for small groups must be voluntary
4. FCPS needs to present the board with a more specific plan for small groups
5. No outside group use of school buildings and grounds except for before/after/all day care (Clubhouse Kids) and swimming pools
6. Extra-Curriculars that can meet virtually are encouraged to do so
7. Fair Day and Election Day will be student virtual school days with days in spring adjusted to account for these changes.

Also from Aug 5 BOE

1. FCTA one year agreement ratified
2. 2021-2022 school year calendar approved
3. 2022-2023 school year calendar to be reworked for week of Aug 15 start date

Charter Work Groups

1. FCPS Meeting was cancelled last minute by Mark Pritts due to concerns of people not ready to meet in person yet. Mark requested that MMCI submit possible dates to Dan Lippy for rescheduling virtually.
2. The ideal for CCM staff would have been to have a plan in place to use from the start of the school year.
3. Contacted by Dan Lippy 8/11 about rescheduling and dates weeks of September 7-11 and 14-18.
4. Subset of the group from FCPS, CCM, and MMCI that had met in January, February, and March received an invitation from Dan Lippy for a workgroup meeting on September 14.
5. Update on benchmarks provided by Marilyn at the Aug 12 GC meeting: *FCPS will not be using the FCPS benchmarks this year. They will be using Scantron and Dibels.*

CCM already uses Dibels and Scantron. When the work group meets, we will be discussing next year's assessments. As of now, state testing is still happening for 2020-2021. AVANT Stamp will be administered in the Spring 2021.

Charter Amendments for December 2020:

1. Link with more details coming...

Maryland EXCELS Accreditation

1. From Molly Carlson 8/6: Congratulations on achieving **Level 5 on the Maryland EXCELS quality rating** for our PreK program!
 - a. Although our site visit didn't happen, our 5-star status was renewed through August 2021 because we had our ducks in a row. I suspect we'll be hearing from MSDE at some point once site visits are possible again.

CCM Corporate Ct Zoning exception

1. Sherry Quinones is handling this for CCM this year.
2. She was able to make contact with county personnel and is working through the process.
3. She has also made contact with the landlord about notarizing.

Charter Renewal Document

1. Brought to attention during the audit process that the most recent version of the CCM Charter has not yet made it to the archives on the MMCI website.
2. I also was not able to find a version on Board Docs by only doing a quick search.
3. Most recent document on the website is 2017 version of the Charter
4. Most recent version is from the Charter renewal in Dec 2019
5. Molly Spence, Jen Kuhn, and Carrie Jean Rathmell will coordinate to update

Custodial Services at CCM During Fall 2020Semester Distance Learning

1. Link with more details coming...

Corporate Ct Repairs

1. Landlord began repairs 8/17 for water damage from frozen AC units in primary classroom and Marilyn's office.

GC Minutes & Virtual Meeting Recordings

1. It was brought to my attention that we need to do a better job of communicating with

families at CCM about where the minutes from past meetings and now video recording of virtual GC meetings can be found.

2. I will be sending a message through Parent Square.
3. Minutes for CCM GC Meetings can be found on the [CCM website](#) under the [About CCMPCS menu](#) on the [School Governance page](#). There is a link to a [folder with past minutes](#).

CCM CSI (school improvement team) met Aug 6 and worked on logistics for the school year.

1. "schedule" of virtual instruction
2. assessment
3. materials/supply list
4. intervention sessions
5. technology (resources, access, accountability)
6. in person small groups
7. virtual learning expectations

Parent Square Communications to Families from Staff about start of school year

1. Supply Lists
2. Distance Learning Support
3. Chromebooks
4. Welcome Back - New School year
5. New staff introductions
6. Parent Orientations
7. Schedules
8. Procedures, routines, expectations

Facilities

1. Finding a long term facilities solution continues to be a top priority
2. Multiple Sites have come on the MMCI Facilities RADAR with more information being solicited and tours being scheduled

Lottery Update

In the month of August through 8/24:

- CCM 8 new enrollments
- MVM 12 new enrollments

Last year 2019, in the entire month of August:

- CCM 8 new enrollments
- MVM 8 new enrollments

We are definitely experiencing more movement at this time, but that is not completely unusual b/c folks love to wait until the last minute. That being said, please keep in mind that MVM lost its secretary, so there was some lag time with folks who had communicated with her about leaving the school but that needed follow ups by us to confirm.

We are cycling through more offers made this month (as compared to last August) to get those who accept slots offered.

- August 1-31, 2019 31 offers sent
- August 1-24, 2020 52 offers sent
-

I definitely believe that COVID and remote learning have affected some new student families' decision to decline their spots (especially as we are in the last week) and may continue in the next couple of weeks as reality sets in.

Spots open at MVM as of 8/24: 6

- PK4 1
- 6th 2
- MS 3

Spots open at CCM as of 8/24: 2

- MS 2